

HONORING YOSEMITE NATIONAL  
PARK**HON. GEORGE RADANOVICH**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, September 29, 2010*

Mr. RADANOVICH. Madam Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the 120th birthday of Yosemite National Park. Yosemite National Park was designated a national park by an Act of Congress on October 1, 1890. Yosemite was the third national park to be designated as such in the United States, following Yellowstone in 1872 and Sequoia in 1890. Friday, October 1, 2010 marks the 120th birthday of the park.

Although Yosemite was the third official national park, it was the history of Yosemite Valley that gave birth to the national park concept. In the 1860s, when commercial interests began to take a foothold in Yosemite, prominent citizens and politicians who were concerned about the effects of these interests began lobbying for Federal protection for the area. A park bill creating the Yosemite Grant passed both houses of Congress and was signed by President Abraham Lincoln on June 30, 1864. The Grant, which set aside the Yosemite Valley and Mariposa Grove, stated that the lands be held "... for public use, resort and recreation . . . inalienable for all time." It was the first time in history that land was set aside purely for preservation and recreation for all people by action of the U.S. Federal Government. The Grant's creation set the precedent for the eventual creation of the first national park, Yellowstone, in 1872. The Yosemite Grant was ceded to and administered by the State of California as a State park until 1906. The Grant was then ceded to the Federal Government and included in Yosemite National Park.

Today, Yosemite National Park encompasses 747,959 acres, stretching across 3 counties and the western slopes of the Sierra Nevada Mountains. Almost 95 percent of the park is Federally designated as wilderness. The park is home to thousands of species of plants and more than 400 species of vertebrates, including fish, amphibians, birds, reptiles, and mammals. Approximately 4 million people from around the world visit Yosemite every year. With endless opportunities for outdoor recreation, most visitors spend their time in the Yosemite Valley, where they hike the John Muir Trail, wander under the canopy of the Giant Sequoias and breathe in the mist of Bridalveil Fall. Other visitors backpack through the wilderness, ascend the granite peaks of Half Dome and El Capitan, or simply enjoy the beauty of Yosemite's nature and wildlife. It is no wonder that Yosemite, with its spectacular waterfalls, high country lakes, meadows and granite domes, is often referred to as the crown jewel of the national park system.

Madam Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the 120th birthday of Yosemite National Park. I invite my colleagues to join me in honoring the history and beauty of Yosemite National Park.

A PROCLAMATION HONORING VOL-  
UNTEER FIREFIGHTER RYAN  
SEITZ**HON. ZACHARY T. SPACE**

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, September 29, 2010*

Mr. SPACE. Madam Speaker,  
Whereas, Ryan Seitz, a volunteer firefighter in McArthur, Ohio, lost his life while fighting a brush fire,

Whereas, in addition to serving as a volunteer firefighter, Seitz also served as assistant director and technology coordinator for the Herbert Wescoat Memorial Library,

Whereas, Seitz risked his life to help others by working as a firefighter,

Resolved, that along with his friends, family, and the residents of the 18th Congressional District, we remember and honor the life of Ryan Seitz, whose courage was matched only by his selflessness, and whose sacrifice should serve as an example of the highest patriotism and devotion to duty.

A PROCLAMATION CONGRATU-  
LATING GRANT ELEMENTARY  
SCHOOL IN SOUTH CHICAGO  
HEIGHTS, ILLINOIS**HON. JESSE L. JACKSON JR.**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, September 29, 2010*

Mr. JACKSON of Illinois. Madam Speaker,  
Whereas, Grant Elementary School located at 2712 Miller Avenue in School District #170 of Chicago Heights, Illinois opened its doors in 1910.

Whereas, Grant Elementary has provided education to tens of thousands of children from the Chicago Heights/South Chicago Heights community during the past 100 years.

Whereas, Grant Elementary has served a diverse student body, providing an exemplary education for children in kindergarten through eighth grades.

Whereas, On October 19, 2010 current and past students and their families, as well as residents and elected officials of Chicago Heights and South Chicago Heights will celebrate Grant Elementary's Centennial Anniversary.

Resolved, That along with the past and present students, teachers, faculty and friends of Grant Elementary and the residents of the 2nd Congressional District of Illinois, I congratulate Grant Elementary School for providing 100 years of excellence in education to students in Chicago Heights and South Chicago Heights.

RECOGNIZING NATIONAL GEAR UP  
DAY**HON. CHAKA FATTAH**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, September 29, 2010*

Mr. FATTAH. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize National GEAR UP Day and the outstanding work of thousands of GEAR UP

participants, families and staff. National GEAR UP Day is an opportunity to celebrate the hard work and dedication of both former and current teachers, counselors, program staff, and students who have been committed to GEAR UP and without whom GEAR UP would not be the success it is today.

This year, I will celebrate national GEAR UP Day with U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan at Friendship Charter Academy in Washington, DC and with students in Pennsylvania, North Carolina and Texas remotely. Governors in Iowa, New Mexico, Maine, Washington, Colorado and North Carolina have issued proclamations proclaiming GEAR UP Day, as has the Lieutenant Governor of American Samoa. They are joined by the Mayor of Lowell, Massachusetts and a message from New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg. Nevada has a proclamation and 130 Wisconsin students will be travelling to Eau Claire to celebrate GEAR UP Day. In Richland, South Carolina, students will sign a College Dreams Wall with the name of the college they plan to attend and in Puerto Rico students welcomed a group of law students to serve as mentors.

Twelve years ago, after witnessing far too few students from low-income communities graduate from high school and enter college, I created Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP). The program supports cohorts of students from 6th grade into their first year of college by providing essential services such as tutoring, scholarship assistance, college campus tours, counseling services, mentoring, and financial aid awareness. In addition, GEAR UP has created partnerships between postsecondary institutions, community groups, businesses, and parents aimed at increasing support for our students to ensure success not only in high school but college as well. The services and partnerships created by GEAR UP have proven to be a successful educational model that prepares students both academically and emotionally for the rigors of college.

Today, I am pleased to announce that twelve years after GEAR UP was enacted, 12 million students in 49 states have participated in the program. This year alone, GEAR UP is providing vital services to approximately 670,000 students in over 5,000 schools across 46 states, including the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. GEAR UP has been remarkably successful. In fact, 80% of GEAR UP students have completed high school and approximately half have matriculated into college—a significantly larger proportion than their non-GEAR UP peers. Furthermore, GEAR UP students take more rigorous and advanced courses. For example, half of all GEAR UP students complete Algebra by 9th grade—an important indicator for high school graduation and college matriculation. These results have proven that with essential services, appropriate resources, and high expectations, students from low-income communities can and will graduate from high school ready to pursue postsecondary education.

Finally, I sincerely want to thank all GEAR UP staff and students throughout the country who have made the program an extraordinary success. I look forward to witnessing future GEAR UP accomplishments and continuing to see increasing numbers of low-income students succeeding in high school, entering college ready to succeed!